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Guest-Friendship in Greek Tragedy

Guest-friendship¹ is a concept which has little, if any, meaning in the modern world, but among the Greeks and Romans it held a unique and very important place. In an age when travel was usually difficult and often hazardous, when public accommodations were either non-existent or wholly inadequate, the need quite naturally arose for some kind of protection and care for the traveler. This need was met in part, at least, by the commonly accepted practice of providing free accommodations in a private home. The relationship between guest and host was regarded as sacred, and any violation of the rights of hospitality was considered a major sin. Zeus as the protecting god of guests and hosts punished the offender. When the time came for the guest to leave, he was usually given a parting gift, and he in turn might reward his generous host with some token of appreciation.

Many allusions to this practice of hospitality are found in Homer.² We read of Axylus of Arisbe who "lived in a house by the side of the road and was a friend of man" (*Il.* 6.12-15),³ of Glaucus and Diomedes, who refused to fight upon discovering that their grandfathers had once been guest-friends (*Il.* 6.119-236), of Odysseus, who was graciously welcomed to the land of the Phaeacians, a people reputed not to be particularly hospitable to strangers (*Od.* 8.387-407). Indeed, an underlying cause of the Trojan War, Menelaus would have it known, was Paris's violation of the laws of hospitality against him (*Il.* 3.350-354, 13.620-625).

Tragedians' Interest in the Theme

The vocabulary associated with the idea of guest-friendship is quite extensive. The Greek word for guest-friend is *ξένος*, and it may refer either to guest or host. It may also be applied to any stranger or foreigner. The term for guest-friendship itself is *ξενία*. The gifts presented by a host to his guest were called *τὰ ξενία*. The act itself was expressed by the verbs *ξενώω* and *ξενίζω*. Liddell and Scott list some twenty-five simple or compound words beginning with the stem *ξεν-*, all of which relate to the idea of guest-friendship. There are, of course, other compounds in which the stem *ξεν-* forms the second element in the word.

The Greek tragic poets, who recognize and attempt to interpret various aspects of human conduct, interest themselves in this sphere of human relations too.

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Not only does mention of guest-friendship frequently occur in the extant plays, but in five of them it provides an essential element in the development of plot. The purpose of this study is to show the extent and the nature of the guest-friendship concept in Greek tragedy apart from its use in the development of plot. The latter provides material for a separate study.

The sin against a guest or host, we find, was put in the same category as the sin of irreverence to the gods or that of disrespect to parents. In the *Eumenides* (269-275) the chorus of Furies threatens to carry Orestes to the world below where he must pay recompense for the murder of his mother, and he is warned that he will see there all those who have sinned against god, stranger, or parent brought to justice. These three sins are again referred to by the same chorus, after Athena has decided to establish a tribunal and bring Orestes to trial. Man is exhorted to revere the altar of justice, to honor his parents, and to show respect to the stranger who comes to his door (540-549). Eteocles (*Sept.* 605-608), generalizing upon the disaster that may result from evil associations, says that even the righteous man, if he associates with fellow-citizens hostile to guests and forgetful of the gods, will be smitten by heaven's impartial lash and brought to submission.

Heracles (HF 391-393) is said to have slain Cycnus ostensibly because he was a slayer of guests—*ξενοδεικτης*.

Three Euripidean Plays

In Euripides' *Helena*, Menelaus warns the sister of the king of Egypt, a priestess, that she will be regarded as a wicked woman if she refuses to save him, a stranger, from the hand of her brother (598). Helen, according to this version of the story, is dwelling in Egypt, having been spirited away to that country by Hermes for safekeeping during the course of the Trojan War. The war is now over and Menelaus has just landed on the coast of Egypt as a shipwrecked stranger. But he has been rudely denied admittance to the king's palace because the Egyptians will have no dealings with the Greeks. Finally, however, the woman, after being prevailed upon to assist Menelaus against her brother and no longer oppose his escape with Helen, says:

. . . I will hold my peace
Of all ye have prayed of me, nor ever be
Co-plotter with my brother's wantonness.
I do him service, though it seem not so,
Who turn him unto righteousness from sin (1017-1021).⁴

In the *Iphigenia Taurica*, too, we find an interesting conflict between the Greek and the barbarian concept of hospitality. Iphigenia has been commissioned to sacrifice on the altar of Artemis all who come as strangers to the land. In a dream she imagines that she has sacrificed her own brother Orestes; and since she believes that he is now dead, she will no longer have tender feelings for anyone, even a Greek, as she had before. And yet, when the time draws near for her to prepare for sacrifice these two new strangers, she becomes less determined and in pity utters a word of sympathy (479-481). And later on, in the recognition scene, the burden of the message which she would send to Orestes is that she be freed from this murderous life:

Bear me to Argos, brother, ere I die:
From this wild land, these sacrifices, save,
Wherein mine office is to slay the stranger . . . (774-776).

At this point Orestes recounts his own recent experiences—the slaying of his mother and the punishment which came to him at the hand of the Furies, his trial at Athens, the still lingering resentment of these dread spirits, and Apollo's commission for him to go to the land of the Taurians, take the image of Artemis, and carry it away to Athens. In the course of his narrative Orestes tells of the inhospitable treatment he received when first he came to Athens:

Thither I came; but no bond-friend at first
Would welcome me, as one abhorred of heaven.
Some pitied; yet my guest-fare set they out
On a several table, 'neath the self-same roof . . . (947-950).

Finally, as Orestes and Iphigenia begin to discuss a plan of escape, it occurs to Orestes that they must first encompass the murder of the king. But Iphi-

genia, who had recoiled so many times from her unwilling role of putting to death strangers, warns: "Foul deed were this, that strangers slay their host" (1021). A less drastic step is accordingly devised, and it is successfully carried out along with the help of Athena in a *dea ex machina* role. The king of the Taurians himself is so impressed by the intervention of the goddess that he refuses to lift his sword against the strangers (1475-1485).

His Satyr Play

Another foreigner proverbially unkind to guests was Polyphemus, the Cyclops, and he was obliged to pay a deserved penalty for his ungracious spirit. The dramatic account of this fascinating, though gruesome tale, appears in Euripides' satyr drama *Cyclops*. Silenus, while tending the one-eyed giant's flocks, spies a Greek ship in the harbor and surmising that the crew is coming to beg food and water he ruefully exclaims:

O you poor wretches! who on earth are these?
Little they dream what hospitalities
Are by the master of this house destroyed,
Who tread this strangely hospitable road
Up to the doors of—Goggle-eyes's jaw,
For right warm welcome to his cannibal maw! (89-94)

Odysseus, the captain of the ship, with his men approaches Silenus and greets him. He inquires concerning the inhabitants of this island and wants to know whether they are friendly to strangers (125). In reply Silenus frankly admits that the flesh of strangers is their most delectable food, and he offers no comment as to the propriety or impropriety of the act. Later, however, the chorus of satyrs warns Polyphemus not to wrong these strangers (272), and Odysseus beseeches him not to kill the guests who have come to his cave (288-289), declaring that there is a law among the nations which requires that suppliants be received and given guest-gifts (299-301). Cyclops, of course, has no fear of Zeus, and as for guest-gifts, theirs, he says, will be a fire and caldron in which to boil (342-344). Odysseus complains that he has been delivered from the perils of war and sea only to be caught up in the clutches of a godless creature such as this, and he pours out a prayer to Athena for help, and calls upon Zeus, the god of guests, to behold his plight (347-355). With utter nonchalance the chorus sings a song, the theme of which is the Cyclops' hideous meal on guests (356-374). With equal gusto they again cheer on Odysseus and his companions as they apply the heated pole to the giant's eye:

Burn out his eye, sir, the gormandizer,
Who goes and fries, sir, the trustful stranger!
(657-658).

Although there seems to be no definite indication in the closing lines of the play that the punishment meted out to Polyphemus is in consequence of his untoward acts of hospitality, the frequent references

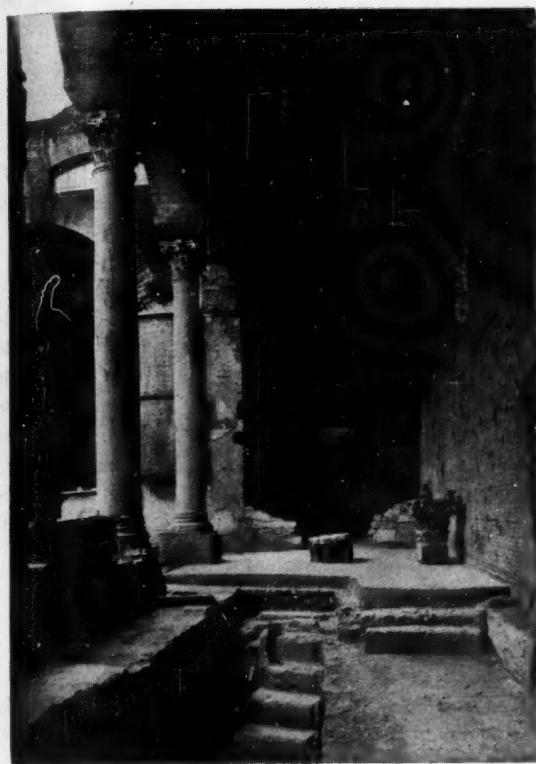


Figure 1—*Santa Maria Antiqua (Ed. ne Alinari)*

throughout the play to guest-friendship point to the conclusion that Zeus Xenios did indeed hear the prayer of his suppliant.

A Fourth Euripidean Play

In Homer, as we have seen, Menelaus prays to Zeus to grant him revenge on Paris, who wronged his host (*Il.* 3.350), and again, he predicts the destruction of Troy for those who had no fear of the wrath of Zeus, the god of guest and host (*Il.* 13.621). In like manner, we find in the tragic poets a strong feeling that the chief cause of the Trojan War was the violation of the rights of guest-friends. In Euripides' *Troades* Menelaus declares that he came to Troy not so much to get back Helen, but rather, he says:

. . . to avenge me on the man,
The traitor guest who stole my wife from me.
He by Heaven's help hath paid the penalty,
He and his land, by Hellene spears laid low (864-867).

Later in the play Helen attempts to justify her actions to Menelaus; and although she holds Aphrodite responsible for her conduct, at the same time she searches her own heart and asks:

What impulse stirred me from thine halls to follow
That guest, forsaking fatherland and home? (946-947)

She too now seems to realize that Paris had been an unworthy guest, and she attributes her elopement with him to divine compulsion.

(Continued on page 52)

Church of Santa Maria Antiqua Reopened

A *Reuters* dispatch from Rome, under date of November 21, 1954, called attention to the fact that on that day, for the first time in a thousand years, Mass had been celebrated "in the little church of Saint Mary the Ancient, one of the oldest in Christendom, dug from the ruins of the Roman emperors' imperial palace in the Roman forum."

The two Alinari photographs of the ancient church, presented herewith, were made available to THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN by the Reverend Robert G. North, S.J., an alumnus of Saint Louis University, now associated with the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome. Important restoration projects have been in progress at the site within recent years; and the results, when fully carried through, should be of high interest.

Particularly appealing, of course, is the resumption of *cultus* in the ancient structure after the interruption of a millennium. Frescoes, so often now a significant part of ancient remains, and far more dexterously handled by modern archaeological methods than was possible in earlier eras of excavation, are represented also in the site of Santa Maria Antiqua. A glance at these is shown in figure 2. The work at Santa Maria Antiqua should prove highly instructive.

Marcus Anthony Haworth, S.J.

Saint Louis University



Figure 2—*Santa Maria Antiqua—with eighth century frescoes (Ed. ne Alinari)*

Guest-Friendship

(Continued from page 51)

"Agamemnon" and "Trachiniae"

The belief that Paris's breach of the laws of hospitality led inevitably to his own ruin and the fall of Troy is clearly brought out by Aeschylus in the *Agamemnon*. In the 800 or more verses of the play leading up to the main action occasioned by the arrival of Agamemnon, the chorus voices the conviction a number of times that Zeus, the god of host and guest, has brought retribution to the guilty. Even before news has been received of the fall of Troy, the chorus remarks that Zeus Xenios has sent the sons of Atreus against Alexander to inflict a long and wearisome struggle on Danaans and Trojans alike (60-67). And when news is presently brought to those in the chorus that Troy has fallen, they declare that Zeus Xenios has brought it to pass (362-366), and they dwell upon the punishment which the gods inflict upon men "who trample underfoot the grace of inviolable sanctities" (370-372). The gods, they maintain, are deaf to the prayers of the unrighteous and destroy them, and "such was even Paris," they say, "who came to the house of the sons of Atreus and did dishonour to his hosts' hospitable board by stealing away a wedded wife" (399-402).⁵

Tragedy provides one further example of warfare attributed to a violation of the rights of guest-friendship, although the reason given is intended to deceive. In Sophocles' *Trachiniae* (260-269), the herald, Lichas by name, reports to Dejanira that Heracles has just won a war over Eurytus, who had insulted him when he had been a guest in his house. The story is false, of course, for the real cause of the war, as presently revealed, was Heracles' passion for Iole, the king's daughter. The passage is hardly less important, however, on that account, for as in the case of the Trojan War it shows that the ill-treatment of a guest was regarded as sufficient grounds for precipitating armed conflict.

"Hippolytus" and "Medea"

Not only do we find a strong conviction in the tragic poets that the person who violates the rights of hospitality must pay a penalty for his sin; but conversely it appears that they also believed that a person guilty of a crime could not expect to be the recipient of hospitality. The young Hippolytus, for instance, having been falsely accused of adultery with his step-mother, and condemned to exile, asks of his enraged father:

Unhappy! Whither shall I flee?—What home
Of what friend enter, banished on such a charge?
(*Hipp.* 1066-1067)

His father scornfully replies:

Of whoso joys in welcoming for guests
Defilers of men's wives, which dwell with sin
(*Hipp.* 1068-1069).

Medea also in the *Medea*, like Hippolytus, can not hope to find friends in exile, for her life has been filled with crime. The chorus asks her where she will turn now, what privileges of guest-friendship or home or land she will find, to deliver her from evil (359-361). And Medea too is equally perplexed, for after her decision to use the day of reprieve to murder Creon and his daughter, as well as Jason, she turns to the chorus and asks:

Now, grant them dead: what city will receive me,
What host vouchsafe a land of refuge, home
Secure, and from the avenger shield my life? (386-388).

She answers her own question with the simple remark: "There is none" (389). And yet, when she has gone so far as to murder her own two children and refuses to surrender their dead bodies to Jason, and the latter prays for vengeance, she sees no hope that his prayer will be answered, for, she says, he has been false to his oath and betrayed the guest (1389-1392).

"Phoenissae" and Aeschylus' "Supplices"

At least once in Greek tragedy the sentiment is expressed that a man in need may find no friends in a strange city. In the play *Phoenissae* Jocasta questions her son Polynices about his lot while an exile at Argos. "Helped they not thee, thy father's friends and guests?" she inquires (402). "Prosper—friends vanish if thou prosper not," he replies (403). But the same Polynices fared better in Athens, for there he had been a guest of Theseus, and when the latter was asked to assist Adrastus of Argos on behalf of the mothers of those slain at Thebes who begged that the dead be given burial, Theseus recalls with genuine warmth the fact that Polynices had once been his own guest (*Eur. Supp.* 930-931).

The tragedy *Supplices* by Aeschylus is concerned perhaps more especially with political asylum for aliens or strangers than with the problem of guest-friendship. In this play, Zeus is regarded as the protecting deity of suppliants (478). However, the epithet *ξέριος* is also ascribed to him (627, 672), indicating no doubt that there was not always a significant differentiation to be made between the suppliant who deserved pity and the ordinary stranger, or in other words between those desiring political asylum and visitors coming to the home of a private citizen. Tucker⁶ suggests, with some plausibility, I think, that Aeschylus is teaching the Athenians, and perhaps the Argives, a lesson in international justice when he has the chorus say: "Thus may their State be regulated well, if they hold in awe mighty Zeus, and, most of all, Zeus the warden of guest-right, who by venerable enactment guideth destiny aright" (670-674).

(Continued on page 55)

Character Analysis of Dido

For centuries Dido, the queen of Carthage, has evoked strong reactions from the readers of the *Aeneis*. They may admire warmly, sympathize deeply, or disapprove vehemently the character of the passionate queen. Indeed, Vergil has portrayed Dido's nature so dramatically that the stimulation of such interest can be easily appreciated. But to know this woman as she really was requires not merely interest but concentrated study of her character. Speech betrays the heart of man, and Vergil allows his heroine much liberty in this regard. It is the purpose of this paper to explain the character traits of Dido, as Vergil portrays them in some of the more important scenes of his epic, in reference to the principles of psychology.

Character may be defined as all that a man is, whether by natural endowments or acquisition, conceived as the stable source of his moral acts.

Consideration of natural endowments or temperament, then, should be the starting point of reflection. Dido's reactions to life situations were quick and lasting, qualities indicative of a choleric disposition. As a result, she was enthusiastic and ambitious with a tremendous capacity for good or evil.

First Meeting with Dido

Our first glimpse in Book One of the Carthaginian queen reveals her as a woman of virtue. How graciously she sympathizes with the forlorn Trojan band, how hospitably she accommodates them! *Solvite corde metum, Teucri, secludite curas.* Again, *Urbem quam statuo, vestra est* (1.573). Her welcome for Aeneas is even more whole-hearted, for Vergil says that her heart stopped when first she looked at him (1.613). The nobility of her guest, his courage, virtue, glorious descent, all these appealed to Dido's ardent soul.¹

That she was an ambitious and capable ruler is evident. Upon their arrival in Carthage the Trojan band marvel at the industry of her subjects, for they work eagerly (*ardentes*: 1.423), like bees toiling in the sun. Moreover, the luxury of the royal palace reveals glorious accomplishment (1.639-641).

Undoubtedly, then, Dido possessed the tremendous potentialities which originated in her strong nature. Before her admiration for Aeneas had become an un disciplined passion, she directed this native power to one end, her life aim: fidelity to Sychaeus (4.28-29).

This determination to be true to her former husband is emphasized in her conversation with her sister, Anna, where she describes her purpose as fixed and immovable: *si mihi non animo fixum immotumque sederet* (4.15). Even amidst her violent passion for Aeneas she renews her intentions of fidelity, securing her resolve with awe-inspiring sanctions (4.24-27). Such a solemn oath intensifies

her moral and religious obligations of fidelity to Sychaeus.²

Purpose and Failure

How then could one who had been virtuous over a long period fail so utterly at the first approach of temptation? What was the cause of her moral collapse? Dido herself gives the answer, for she says of Aeneas: *Solus hic inflexit sensus animumque labantem Impulit* (4.22-23).

That Dido had loved Sychaeus intensely is undisputed. But, psychologists tell us, "If the will finds an adequate motive, it is strong enough for any act. . . . An apparent value need only assert itself into their consciousness, and the cedars of Lebanon fall."³

Vergil writes in truth to this principle when he makes her attraction for Aeneas and the intervention of Cupid constitute the forces which shake Dido's tenacious resolution beyond endurance.

Unfaithfulness to her life aim plunged Dido into monstrous guilt and its attendant misery. The moral consequences of her infidelity comprise the remainder of her story. She becomes immediately *infelix Dido*. It is an amazing but a profitable consideration to study the disastrous effects on her character. As previously she had channeled her remarkable energy into works for the common good, so now did this same power rub her guilty soul for ends wholly self-seeking.

Loss of Prudence

First and foremost in her defection, Dido lost the virtue of prudence. According to Saint Thomas, Prudence may be lost not directly, as by forgetting, but by the corruption of the passions.⁴ Quoting Aristotle⁵ who wrote that pleasure above all corrupts the estimate of prudence, the Angelic Doctor adds: *et praecipue delectatio, quae est in venereis, quae totam animam absorbet, et tradit ad sensibilem delectationem.*⁶

It would seem that no more apt description of Dido's character could be written. Indeed, her conversation with Anna in Book Four reveals her deficiency of four integral parts of Prudence. She does not possess *intellectus* and *memoria*, for she grasps the significance of the situation. One might also credit her with *docilitas*, since she is seeking advice, although it is from a prejudiced relative. But other component parts of prudence are not so evident, especially *ratio*. When Dido applied universal moral principles to her particular case, she did not do so correctly, perhaps because she lacked also still other constituent parts,—namely, *providentia*, to suggest the future yet inevitable cessation of her passion; *circumspectio*, to realize that love, although good in itself, was wrong for one in her circumstances because Aeneas's mission and her vow forbade their marriage; *cautio*, to adumbrate hindrances to the successful conclusion of her plans.

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EDITORIAL

Speech for True Communication

Aulus Gellius, purveyor of many an instructive and delightful anecdote, tells in his *Noctes Atticae* (1.10) how the philosopher Favorinus had rebuked a young man for choosing to speak in a language utterly archaic and unintelligible. The youth's purpose, seemingly, was to escape being understood: *quod scire atque intellegere neminem vis quae dicas*, says Favorinus—"because you do not want any one to know and understand what you are saying." And then he adds, sagely, as a philosopher should: *Nonne, homo inepte, ut quod vis abunde consequaris, taces?* "Stupid youth that you are, if you really want to achieve such a purpose, would it not be better to keep silence altogether?"

In our day, there is much fruit for thought in this simple tale. We are accustomed, unfortunately, to hearing language used for the express purpose of deceiving, rather than informing, the auditor. So-called "diplomatic language" often enough strives to attain the goal of ambiguity, to say both "yes" and "no" at one and the same time, and thus to have an escape when an expected line of action proves inconvenient. The language of advertising frequently uses the full skill of trained copy writers to state what is in absolute verbal force true, but in implication far removed from truth.

Beyond this, and far more prevalently, one encounters the student with an almost total lack of sensitivity for his native tongue. English instructors bemoan in college the trials of freshman composition courses. And the general experience of faculty men and women in all courses and departments bears out the validity of lamentation on the part of their colleagues in English. For too many young Americans, accustomed to receiving what

they want with a minimum effort of appeal, have never felt an awakening sense of the beauties of their own language, or even a basic yearning for that brightest of all gems in the linguistic crown—clarity.

It has been said many times, but it should be repeated and shouted from the housetops, that one of the most kindly benefits from a study of the classical languages is a service to the betterment of English. There were villains, to be sure, among the Greeks and Romans; there were those versed in duplicity, who employed the potentialities of language, not to communicate thought but to disguise thought. Yet the innate character and genius of the two languages made for clarity as few instruments of human expression may be expected to do. The simple *μὲν . . . δέ* of Greek, as has so often been averred, pointed a contrast, set off one concept as against another, made one idea clear by showing its difference from a second. Likewise, the abundant use of particles in Greek—often so puzzling to the modern student—aided in elucidating the relationships of thought unit to thought unit, whether by way of contrast, or consequence, or amplification, or whatever other turn the context required.

Latin likewise used its particles, its small words, in the same way. Except for authors who made an objective of brevity—a Sallust, a Seneca, a Tacitus—Roman writers seemed to feel that a particle or expressed connective of some sort was essential to bind a sentence with its predecessor. And the majestic Roman periodic sentence, such as a Cicero or a Livy might write, was a masterpiece of organization: a sentence with a leading and central thought, about which, in varying degrees of subordination, allied but less vital concepts of circumstance, cause, comparison, and the like might be grouped.

No proper study of Greek and Latin, even in rather elementary levels, can escape the fascination of this innate clarity of the classical tongues. Often it seems to defy translation into our own English. Yet rendered it must be, and here something of the value of "Greek or Latin for English" naturally appears. Adroitly used, English is just as sharp a tool for forceful and clear communication of thought as Greek or Latin; and English has riches that neither of the ancient languages possessed. But these older media can aid, forcefully, to a realization of the ideal of today's speech for a true and clear communication of thought.

—W. C. K.

If . . . Xenophon became in Roman times a model of "Atticism," it is due to his ancient simplicity and ease, his *in affectata iucunditas*. He is Attic in the sense that he has no bombast, and does not strive after effect, and that he can speak interestingly on many subjects, "without raising his voice."—*Gilbert Murray*.

Guest-Friendship

(Continued from page 52)

Euripides' "Heraclidae"

Euripides' *Heraclidae* likewise concerns a group of individuals seeking protection. After Heracles' death and his ascension to Olympus to join the gods, Eurystheus, who had inflicted so many labors on the hero during his lifetime, now directs his fury against the children of Heracles and persecutes them, even seeking to kill them. To escape his wrath, they had fled, under the protection of Iolaus, who had been their father's friend and helper. Wherever they turned for refuge they had been driven out. Finally they take refuge at the altar-steps of the temple of Zeus at Marathon, a city then subject to Athens. At this point Copreus, Eurystheus' herald, finds them and threatens to take them back to Argos. Iolaus appeals to the chorus of local citizens to give them help (69-72). Having learned the circumstances, the chorus members announce that they will respect the rights of these suppliants (101-104): ". . . 'Twere an impious thing To cast off suppliant hands to the knees of our city that cling!" (107-108). Copreus then tells them that it would be better for them not to interfere, but they warn:

Thou shouldst have shown respect to this free land,
And told her King, ere thy presumption tore
Therefrom the strangers in her Gods' despite (111-113).

Accordingly, he agrees to leave the decision to the king, who happens to be Demophon, the son of Theseus. When presented with the facts, the king finds full justification for refusing to deliver up these young people to Eurystheus, and the herald returns to Argos. Shortly news is brought that the king of Argos is coming to make war on Athens for the surrender of the suppliants. At this point the seers advise the necessity of sacrificing a maiden of high honor to Persephone to insure victory. Demophon, however, despite his good intentions toward the suppliants, is put to the test, and declares that he will not offer up his own daughter nor the daughter of any other Athenian. Public opinion is divided on the matter, observes the king:

Where some say, right it is to render help
To suppliant strangers, some cry out upon
My folly:—yea, and if I do this thing,
Even this day is civil war afoot (416-419).

The chorus asks whether deity forbids Athens to help strangers, when she is eager to do so (425-426). Iolaus is discouraged, but does not completely give up hope. The chorus, taking his words as rebuke, replies:

O ancient, upon Athens cast not blame!
Haply, 'twere false, yet foul reproach were this
That we abandoned stranger-suppliants (461-463).

Finally, the gallant maiden Macaria, a daughter of Heracles, offers herself as the victim; and since she is of high birth, she thus insures victory for the Athenians over the Argives.

Sophocles' "Oedipus Coloneus"

The word *ξένος*, which occurs repeatedly in the *Oedipus Coloneus*, seems to be used primarily in the sense of "stranger." Whether the word conveyed a double meaning to the Athenian audience it would be difficult to say. However, it is conceivable that when an appeal was made in the name of hospitality it carried a strong suggestion of the guest-friend relationship. There are certainly a few occurrences of *ξένος* in the play which refer unmistakably to hospitality in the usual Greek sense. For example, when the citizens of the chorus are on the point of driving the blind Oedipus from the city, he bases his appeal for mercy on their sense of fairness to strangers:

. . . For, look you, now
Athens is held of States the most devout,
Athens alone gives hospitality
And shelters the vexed stranger, so men say (260-263).

The protection which Oedipus seeks is, of course, of a general nature, and hardly based on the personal relationship between guest and host. It is more particularly a suppliant's plea. And yet Oedipus at a later time does indeed beg them in the name of hospitality not to insist that he reveal the cause of his suffering (515-516). The situation becomes brighter for Oedipus with the appearance of King Theseus, for in him he finds a sympathetic friend. Theseus too had suffered the hardships of an exile's life. Addressing Oedipus he says:

. . . I too was reared
Like thee, in exile, and in foreign lands
Wrestled with many perils, no man more.
Wherefore no alien in adversity
Shall seek in vain my succour, nor shalt thou (564-568).

To the chorus he promises a little later:

First, he can claim the hospitality
To which by mutual contract we stand pledged . . .
(632-633).

Henceforth throughout the play Theseus stands ready to protect this stranger in his midst and permits him to find a peaceful end to his turbulent life.

Euripides' "Ion" and "Rhesus"

A pretence of the guest-friend relationship is used by Xuthus in Euripides' *Ion* to conceal the identity of Ion. Xuthus proposes to take his newly discovered son to a public feast as his guest-friend, and then conduct him to Athens, not as his son but as a sight-seer (654-656). Ion gives his consent, but prays that he may be found to be the son of an Athenian mother, lest as a stranger he forfeit the privileges of free speech (668-675).

An interesting distinction between an ally and a guest-friend is made in Euripides' *Rhesus*. Rhesus and his Thracian warriors have just arrived at Troy at the very time when victory for the Trojans seems about to be realized. Hector, showing his displeasure at their belated arrival, expresses the conviction that they have postponed their coming until after the worst of the fighting simply to share in the fruits of

victory, without the hardships of war. He will, therefore, not consider them as allies, but he will admit them only as guest-friends (333-336). It takes little persuasion, however, to cause Hector to change his mind, and he soon agrees to receive them as allies. The advantage would seem to be one of degree; for as allies they could share in the glories of victory, but as guests they could expect to receive only accommodations and perhaps guest-gifts.

Five Additional Plays

As was mentioned before, there remain five additional plays in which the relationship of guest and host forms an essential element in the development of plot. These are the *Choephoroi* of Aeschylus, the *Electra* of Sophocles, the *Electra* of Euripides, and the *Hecuba* and *Alcestis* of Euripides. In the first three of these, the *Electra* plays, intrigue is successfully carried out through a pretense of guest-friendship. In the *Hecuba* a violation of the sacred rights of hospitality results in retribution to the offender. In the *Alcestis* we find that respect for the laws of hospitality, even under very trying circumstances, seems, as Harsh observes, "one of the moral motivations of the play." An analysis of the use of guest-friendship in these five plays is highly important for a complete picture of the custom as presented in Greek tragedy, but such a study must be reserved for another article. The study thus far should serve to show that guest-friendship as it appears in Greek tragedy was a very real and highly honored institution, and to point to the fact that a recognition of this is helpful for a better understanding and appreciation of the plays.

Graydon W. Regenos

Tulane University

NOTES

1 In addition to the usual handbooks on Greek antiquities, see J. P. Mahaffy, *Social Life in Greece from Homer to Menander* (London 1877) 48-51; Thomas Day Seymour, *Life in the Homeric Age* (New York 1907) 452-455; Charles Burton Gulick *The Life of the Ancient Greeks* (New York 1902) 251-252; Walter Miller, *Greece and the Greeks* (New York 1941) 230. 2 Seymour, op. cit. (*supra*, n. 1) 452-455. 3 Cf. Sam Walter Foss's poem, "The House by the Side of the Road."

4 Throughout this paper translations are from the *Loeb Classical Library*. The translator for Aeschylus is Herbert Weir Smyth (2 vols. London and New York 1922-1926); for Sophocles, F. Storr (2 vols. London and New York 1912-1913); and for Euripides, Arthur S. Way (4 vols. London and New York 1912-1920). 5 Cf. *Ag.* 699-715, 744-749. 6 *Supp.*, footnote on passage. 7 *A Handbook of Classical Drama* (Stanford 1944) 75.

Character of Dido

(Continued from page 53)

In a further analysis of the same conversation, we can see that *infelix Dido* also lacks the potential parts of the virtue. Primarily, she lacks *eubulia*, the habit of taking counsel well, because her counsel is incorrect, for it lacks goodness, and it not only does not refer to her ultimate end, but directly contradicts it; secondly, as a result of her defect in *eubulia*,

Dido also fails in her judgment and again in the act of perception itself. Her vice is that of inconstancy, for Dido is diverted from her subjective judgment of conscience, which had led her to vow fidelity to Sychaeus. The rejection of her former resolution resulted from the impulse of passion, the usual source of error in inconstancy.

The Other Cardinal Virtues

Because of the interdependence of prudence and the other moral virtues, one may expect to find Dido's grave defect of Prudence to result from and cause still other vices opposing Temperance, Fortitude, and Justice. According to Father Lumbreus, O.P., the perfect cardinal virtues are (so) mutually connected that he who has one has the others.⁷ To be sure, Dido does demonstrate this fact well—from the negative approach.

Her intemperance manifested itself immediately in the violation of chastity. Dido's deficiency lay primarily in *verecundia*, for *honestas* was strong in her. It was the source of the mental conflict which she described to Anna in Book Four. The cause of hesitation is concern for her former love and her vow—both noble appreciations. *Honestas* also constitutes the basis of her pitiful plea to Aeneas to remain in Carthage (4.321-322). Remorse for abandoning her moral principles even leads to suicide. As she prepared her funeral pyre her heart deplored her crime (4.552). Indeed, the thought that she must in lowly fashion seek a Nomad husband whom she has scorned makes death more inviting (4.535-536). *Quin morere ut merita es*, she cries (4.547), *ferroque averte dolorem*.

It is true that her attitude toward infidelity was one of repulsion, the effect of *verecundia*. Nevertheless, the fundamental reason for this aversion is love for the beautiful, the property of *honestas*. If *verecundia* had been the stronger factor, she would not have preferred the greater moral evil of suicide above the merely natural humiliation to which she seemed doomed for the remainder of her life.

Contrasts in Dido's Actions

It is this outstanding love for the good which makes the comparison of some of the potential parts of Temperance which the Queen evinced at the beginning and end of her tale more pathetic. What a picture of patient gentleness she appeared on the Trojans' arrival! But how differently she acts at their departure: *Saevit inops animi totamque incensa per urbem Bacchatur* (4.300-301). Not only is she angry, but evinces hatred in the curse which she utters on her deathbed, calling down lasting destruction on the Trojans and their descendants for all future times (4.622-627).

This spirit of revenge was the culmination of pride, which affords a striking contrast to her former

modesty. The appearance of Dido in Book One emphasized the beauty and dignity of the queen, for she was surpassingly lovely (1.496). A far different picture is presented in her undignified speech in Book Four, which alternately depicts haughty insolence and humble supplications.

Failure in Justice

Since the cardinal virtues are mutually connected, Dido's lack of Prudence and Temperance led also to a failure in Justice. In the beginning of the *Aeneis*, Dido is portrayed as an ideal ruler, possessing justice that resembled a "touch of masculinity."⁵ Vergil tells us how equitable her ordinances were, how fair the tasks she assigned (1.507-508). But royal duties were ignored during her infatuation, and the work of building was neglected (4.86-89).

As in the consideration of Prudence and Temperance, the potential parts of Justice also indicate a similar disintegration. Besides the obvious irreligious act of suicide, the unhappy woman failed miserably in other companion virtues. For example, she violates veracity. Refusing to call her affair with Aeneas by its true designation, *coniugium vocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam* (4.172). She also deludes her sister as she prepares for her death (4.500-501). Another attestation of her disintegration is the revengeful attitude she assumes on her deathbed, when she curses her former lover and his people as was stated above.

Powers of Fortitude

But however interesting the study of Dido's other virtues may be, the dramatic tone of her story originates from her tremendous capacity for aggression. This power makes the two integral parts of Fortitude which concern such acts, namely confidence and magnificence, outstanding in her character. Vergil vividly portrays Dido's possession of both these traits, which enabled her to overcome the terrible grief at her husband's murder and to found one of the greatest cities in the world. But when she could no longer attack, when her role must be to suffer, she was a defenseless woman. Patience and perseverance the character of Dido lacked, and under the pressure of passive suffering she chose the apparently easier relief—death. Powerful diction describes her plight. Rumor has brought Dido the maddening news that Aeneas is planning to leave, and Vergil adds the perfect reaction, her helpless rage (4.300).

Dido had been every inch a queen, a woman of high ideals who delighted in challenge. *Degeneres animos timor arguit*, she had once remarked (4.13). In fact, it was her refusal to compromise that drove her to suicide. Paradoxically, the quality that had made her magnificent in her virtuous days finally debases her to commit this most cowardly act.

Because she fears to be abandoned, to be lonely, Dido desperately uses all her power to keep Aeneas in Carthage. At first frenzied and hateful, she finally controls herself and pathetically supplicates Aeneas to remain (4.314, 319-320). When Aeneas refuses, she again becomes inflamed (4.362-388). Yet once more she renews her efforts to persuade him (4.415).

Her efforts are unsuccessful, and she prepares her funeral pyre. At this point Dido suffers submissively, although she pales, at the approach of death (4.644), for she now seeks only escape. Her dying words reveal her reconciliation to death: *Sed moriamur, ait. Sic, sic iuvat ire sub umbras* (4.660). She is the queen once more.

Never again does she descend from her dignity. In the sixth book of the *Aeneis*, Vergil tells us that she scorns her former lover, for Aeneas tries in vain to soothe her wrath; but she turns away as if she were hard flint or Marpesian rock (6.467-470). The attitude expressed in these lines is the greatest likeness to longanimity that Vergil attributes to Dido after her passionate despair. She has paid well, he seems to say, and thus becomes again the woman of unrelenting strength, there as a shade in the netherworld.

It is also Vergil's last touch to her portrait . . . a portrait, we might add, that is so perfectly drawn that it corresponds to the philosophy of the virtues developed by Saint Thomas thirteen hundred years later. And truly this touch is a fitting end to Dido's story, for it is her intense nature which has made Dido an outstanding character in all literature. This strong feminine power to act, to love, even to sin and to suffer, has charmed all readers of the *Aeneis* through the ages.

It is this same force which makes the lessons she teaches so striking. A single sketch only begins the task of revealing them. Each must trace the lines for himself and discover to what they point. But the reward is great: each will find that *infelix Dido* teaches a great lesson.

Sister M. Loretta Margaret Killeen, I.H.M.
Marygrove College—Monroe Campus,
Monroe, Michigan

NOTES

1 F. J. H. Letters, *Virgil* (New York 1946) 111. 2 Henry W. Prescott, *The Development of Virgil's Art* (Chicago 1927) 274. 3 Johann Lindworsky, S.J., translated by A. Steiner and E. A. Fitzpatrick, *The Training of the Will* (Milwaukee 1929) 84. 4 *Summa Theol.* II. ii. 47.16. 5 *Eth.* 6.5. 6 *Summa Theol.* II. ii. 53.6. 7 "Notes on the Connection of the Virtues," *Thomist* 11 (1948) 221. 8 Letters, op. cit. (*supra*, n. 1) 111.

Greek has lived on from the days before Homer into our own, one and the same language always, in spite of small changes,—still giving new proofs of its flexibility in the ease with which it finds terse expression for modern ideas.—Jebb.

Breviora

Historians as Tragedians in Narrating Disaster

In a recent article an American college professor described the United States as a nation without a sense of tragedy. In her comparatively brief history, our country as a whole has never seen the greater number of her cities destroyed nor most of her fields ravaged, nor been called upon to rebuild a civilization broken over all its area, as so many older nations of both past and present have had to do. Just as the great dramatists of the world have immortalized the tragedies of individual men, so too the historians have preserved for us an account of the downfalls of great cities and cultures. In their works we can watch great nations that have gone before us acquire their sense of tragedy.

It was the unfortunate lot of the Carthaginian nation to have her fall alone stand conspicuous in the annals of the world, and to have the preservation of her glory entrusted to the hands of foreign historians. Nevertheless, we know that this colony, founded on the northern coast of Africa by the Phoenician state of Tyre, had a history that was long and prosperous: *Nec tantum Carthago habuisset opum sexcentos fere annos, sine consilio et disciplina* (Cic. *Rep.* 2.48); and that together with her maritime and military interests there was in existence a native literature: *Qui mortales initio Africam habuerint, ut ex libris Punicis, qui regis Hiempsalis dicebantur, interpretatum nobis est* (Sall. *Iug.* 17).

Until her contact with the growing power of Rome, the mother colony had won for herself by foreign conquest a sizeable empire among the neighboring islands of the Mediterranean—Sardinia, Corsica, Sicily, and finally the Spanish mainland itself. Then flared up the conflict that was called by Livy the "most memorable of all wars which were ever waged" (21.1), and has been described by a modern historian as the war in which "the greatest military genius who ever lived attacked the most military people which ever existed—and the genius was defeated, after a sixteen years war."

The elements which combined to defeat this military genius were many, for Hannibal had to contend with disloyal factions at home as well as the undaunted courage of his opponents. The enmity that existed between these two nations toward the end of their great conflict is vividly portrayed by two scenes from their respective Senate chambers: Hannibal beseeching his fellow-countrymen that they, who have withstood the might of Roman arms, be not worsted by the galling yoke of Roman taxation; and Cato the Elder closing every address before the Roman senate with the words: *Carthago delenda est* (Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 27). And so she was, in 146 B.C.

Just about a century and a half before these events at Carthage, another city fell from the summit of military and political glory. This time, however, the event is recorded by one of her sympathetic citizens. Thucydides described the Athens that he loved in the words of a visiting Corinthian envoy: the people of Athens are revolutionary, quick in the conception and in the execution of every new plan; they are bold beyond their strength, and run risks which prudence would condemn; they are impetuous, and when conquering they pursue their victory to the uttermost, when defeated they fall back to the least (Thuc. 1). And to enhance their greatness they have a great leader to control their free and impetuous spirit, to humble them when they are arrogant, and inspire them when cast down by fear (Thuc. 2).

But the picture is vastly different after twenty-seven years of almost continual warfare. The disaster in the harbor at Syracuse is followed shortly by the death-blow that came with the defeat at Aegospotami. Defeated and alone, the Paralus speeds to Athens with the dread tidings of the disaster. In the middle of night she slips into the Piraeus, and quickly the news of defeat passes up the Long Walls from man to man until it reaches the waiting city. And Xenophon tells us, *ἐκείνης τῆς νυκτὸς οὐδεὶς ἔκοιμηθε* (*Hell.* 2.1).

These are but two of the nations whose growth and decline have helped to form the pattern of human history. Their stories are far more complex than those of individual men, but perhaps the task of the historians who have told them was not altogether unlike that of the dramatist. For as it is human courage and resourcefulness that builds great cities, so the *āugria* that bring their downfall are in the final analysis the mistakes of individual men. Hence the historian of nations and cultures, no less than the dramatist, must tell the story of his tragedy in terms of human suffering.

William Vincent Dych, S.J.

Saint Louis University

Quomodo Mare Factum Sit Salsum

Olim erant duo fratres: alter dives, alter pauper. Hie-
id est, frater pauper—fortunam habebat semper adversam.

In die Christi natalicia, ibat ad fratrem divitem, et rogabat
eum cibum. Frater dives ait: "Pernam tibi dabo, si postea
nulla umquam rogabis." Frater pauper pernam accepit, et
domum proficiebatur.

Priusquam domum advenit, senem vidit in via. Senex ait
illi: "Quo portas istam pernam pulcherrimam?" Pauper:
"Domum, ad uxorem." Senex: "Nil boni sic conficies. Si
mihi pernam dabis, tibi dabo molam mirabilem. Mola faciet
quaecumque cupies, si hoc modo eam rotaveris. Ut molam
sistas, clama 'Halt!'—quod est verbum barbarum." Pauper
consensit, et senex evanuit.

Postquam pauper domum advenit, ostendit molam uxori,
sed, quamquam ea assidue rogabat unde maritus molam
accepisset, nihil dixit.

Paulo post, molam secreto rotavit pauper. Ecce! Cena
splendida apparuit in mensa! Rursum molam rotavit. Fru-
tus et vinum! Tunc pauper uxor conserderunt et ederunt
omnia.

Per noctem, cum maritus dormiret, uxor molam furatus
est et magno eam vendidit viro, qui gubernator navis erat.
Sed mulier non explanavit, quia nesciit, quomodo mola sis-
posset. Gubernator, mola in nave posita, celeriter vela dabat
ne pauper eum consequeretur.

Cum in medio mari esset, iussit molam salem facere, et
rotavit. Mola coepit salem effundere. Mox tota navis im-
plete erat. Gubernator clamavit: "Satis est. Nunc siste!"
Sed mola, quia gubernator "Halt!" non dixisset, non desine-
bat. Navis propter salem fiebat gravissima. Gubernator ru-
sum clamavit. Sed frustra!

Navis coepit sub fluctibus submergi. Gubernator se vertit
ad socium, qui Graecus erat, rogatans: "Quid faciamus?"
Socius respondit: "οὐδὲ οἶδα" (*latine*: 'nescio'). οὐ μηδὲ;
(*latine*: 'vae mihi, sal'). Mirabile dictu! Mola constituit.

Ἄλις—quod vos non fugit—est verbum Graecum, *salem*
significans. Sed mola id non cognovit. Mola putabat verbum
esse barbarum "Halt!" et sic constituit.

Quomodo igitur mare factum est salsum?

Sed hic est aliud rem,
Ut dixit Aristotelem.

Leo Max Kaiser

Loyola University of Chicago

High School Latin Contest Winners

In the Twenty-eighth Annual Interscholastic Latin Contest, held among Jesuit high schools of the Midwest on December 7, 1954, the following were announced as winners: *first place* Wayne L. Fehr, Saint Xavier, Cincinnati; *second*, John Mahoney, Saint Ignatius, Cleveland; *third*, Peter Schmidt, Campion, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin; *fourth*, Peter Wagner, Loyola, Chicago; *fifth*, Robert Blatnik, Regis, Denver, and John E. Mansfield, Saint Ignatius, Cleveland; *seventh*, Allen Fauke, Saint Louis; *eighth*, Charles Bencik, Saint Ignatius, Chicago; *ninth*, Dieter Misgeld, Saint Ignatius, Chicago. Point totals were as follows: Saint Ignatius (Cleveland), 145; Saint Xavier, 10; Campion, 8; Loyola, 7; Saint Ignatius (Chicago), 6; Regis, 5.5; Saint Louis, 4.

Vergilian Society and Summer School

The Vergilian Society of America, Inc., announces as its purpose and work "promotion of classical education by way of providing Latin and Greek teachers information, inspiration, and special background for their teaching and scholarship. This it does by an annual publication sent to members *The Vergilian Digest*, but most of all by conducting in Italy a summer school for classical teachers" at the Villa Vergiliiana in Cumae. Regular membership is one dollar annually; supporting memberships are five dollars or more annually. President of the Vergilian Society is John J. Savage of Cambridge, Massachusetts, professor emeritus of classical languages at Fordham University; vice-president, J. Appleton Thayer, Saint Paul's School, Concord, New Hampshire; secretary-treasurer, Charles T. Murphy, head, department of classics, Oberlin College.

Director of the Summer School is the Reverend Raymond V. Schoder, S.J., head of the department of classical languages at West Baden College, West Baden Springs, Indiana. There are three sessions of two weeks each, between July 1 and August 12, and a special eight-day term from August 11

to 21 for participants in summer sessions at Rome and Athens. The Vergilian Summer School, according to its Director, provides "delightful modern living accommodations" and lectures "on the spot at Cumae, Pompeii, Herculaneum, Capri, Paestum, Baiae, Avernus, Misenum, Pozzuoli, and the great National Museum in Naples" either by the Director or by outstanding Italian authorities, Professors Sestieri, Elia, Mustilli.

Tuition, including transportation to lecture sites, is \$60 per session; room and board at the Villa Vergiliiana amount to about an additional \$3.50 per day. It is announced that, because of limited capacity, persons interested should make their applications early, to the Director, Father Schoder, at West Baden College.

ALA Contest—"Why I Teach"

The American Legion Auxiliary announces its 1954-1955 contest for teachers, entitled "Why I Teach." The purpose of the contest is to encourage eligible young men and women to enter the teaching profession.

A contestant must have completed five years of teaching by June 1, 1955. The essays must be of not less than 250, and not more than 300, words.

There will be divisional awards of a fifty dollar United States savings bond to the contestant having the winning entry in each of the five divisions. A national award of a \$250 United States savings bonds will go to one of the five divisional winning contestants.

Mrs. J. Pat Kelly of Birmingham, Alabama, National Security Chairman of the American Legion Auxiliary, has announced that the date of the contest is from December 1, 1954, to midnight of June 1, 1955.

All entries are to be sent to the national headquarters of the American Legion Auxiliary, 777 North Meridian Street, Indianapolis 7, Indiana.

Book Reviews

Two Studies by David M. Robinson: *A Hoard of Silver Coins from Carystus*. New York, The American Numismatic Society, 1952 (*Numismatic Notes and Monographs* No. 124). Pp. 62; plates 6. "Unpublished Greek Gold Jewelry and Gems," reprinted from *AJA* 57 (January 1953) 5-19; plates 25.

During the past few years Professor Robinson has had the good fortune to acquire a considerable number of ancient coins and many pieces of ancient Greek jewelry. In the numismatic monograph, he gives a detailed description of a domestic hoard of ninety-two silver coins now in his possession which originally came from the site of ancient Carystus, an important city situated at the southern end of Euboea at the foot of Mount Ocha. The coins are dated from the end of the fifth century to the second half of the third century before Christ. They are of two denominations: staters and drachmas. Forty-six of the coins were minted at Carystus, thirty more are from the island outside of Carystus, and the remaining sixteen originated in other parts of Greece.

In his article in *AJA*, Mr. Robinson gives a careful description of a gold medallion, a bracelet, and a pair of earrings in his collection coming from a large Hellenistic hoard said to have been found in 1929 in two large jars in the river Xerias, near Halmyrus in Thessaly. He compares the medallion and bracelet with others of the same general character found either in the same hoard or giving evidence of having come from the same workshop. The numerous illustrations which accompany the article show the high degree of technical skill which the metal workers of the Hellenistic age possessed. Mr. Robinson is to be congratulated not only on his readiness to share a knowledge of his personal treasures with the general public, but also for the mastery which he shows in these highly specialized branches of Greek archaeology.

M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J.

Saint Stanislaus Seminary,
Florissant, Missouri

Herbert A. Musurillo, S.J., *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs. Acta Alexandrinorum: Edited with Commentary*. Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1954. Pp. xiii, 299. 35s. New York, Oxford University Press. \$5.60.

For more than fifty years students of Egyptian papyri have been more or less perplexed by a series of fragments which have been described as the "Pagan Acts of the Martyrs." This name was given to them because they resemble, at least in their external form, the Acts of the

Christian Martyrs. Hitherto it has been difficult to obtain an adequate picture of the Pagan Acts, since they have been published as a rule singly, and in different journals and monographs over a considerable period of time; and in numerous cases the editors either made exaggerated claims for the texts or failed adequately to comprehend their content. Father Musurillo has now grouped together all of the known fragments of this type of literature, reedited them with extensive notes and commentary, and has given translations wherever the text is sufficiently clear to warrant so doing. He divides his texts into two categories. The first includes those for which there are sufficient grounds for maintaining their rightful position among the Acts, and the second consists of dubious and unidentified fragments. Eleven Acts, a few in two or three different recensions, are listed in the first group, and nine are placed in the second, including two hitherto unpublished fragments. Five appendices have been added dealing with the grammar of the Acts, the tradition of martyr literature, the influence of the mime, protocol, and novel in their composition, their historicity, and their possible origin and purpose.

Father Musurillo rejects the opinion that the Acts were fragments of some historical romance, and also the theory that they were the product of a single author: "With the discovery of many new fragments written by different hands, I do not think anyone now would suggest that the single work postulated by von Premerstein and the Unitarian school was completely transcribed as many times as we have separate fragments" (pp. 265-266). Neither does he believe that they owe their immediate origin to Cynic or Stoic-Cynic inspiration. They seem rather to be elaborated accounts of the resistance of various influential Alexandrians to Roman rule, prepared for reading in the Hellenistic clubs of Alexandria. The members of these clubs were particularly grieved by Rome's refusal to grant them a local Senate. When this prohibition was lifted by Septimius Severus in 199/200 A.D., opposition to Rome gradually died down, though at least some of the Acts of the two preceding centuries continued to be copied and to be preserved in private libraries.

The editor of the Acts has done a remarkable piece of work on an extremely difficult problem. Though the conclusions are perhaps not so definitive as one might have hoped prior to the undertaking of this study, it has been definitely shown that no exaggerated claims can be made for the influence of the Pagan Acts on the Christian *Acta Martyrum*. Passing reference is made in the appendix on the tradition of martyr literature to the persecution of the Jews by the Romans in imperial times. The point might well have been elaborated, since I believe that closer parallels to the *Acta Alexandrinorum* may be found in the Talmud than in the Christian *Acta Martyrum*. Also, an interesting comparison might have been drawn between the attitude towards persecution shown by these pagans of Alexandria and the contemporary Gnostics, who had no ambitions for martyrdom whatsoever, and considered refusal to comply with the imperial decrees a kind of suicide.

M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J.

Saint Stanislaus Seminary,
Florissant, Missouri

Two Monographs by William Hardy Alexander: *Maius Opus (Aeneid 7-12)*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1951 (*University of California Publications in Classical Philology*, volume 14, no. 5, pp. 193-214). \$0.25. *The Tacitean "Non Liquet" on Seneca*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1952 (*University of California Publications in Classical Philology*, volume 14, no. 8, pp. 269-386). \$1.25.

The Vergilian essay was first presented as the presidential address at the annual meeting of the American Philological Association in 1949. Professor Alexander strives to show that the last six books of the *Aeneis*, which have been sadly neglected in modern times, may well have been for Vergil's contemporary audience, and for Vergil himself, what he claimed them to be—the more important part of the epic:

... Maior rerum mihi nascitur ordo,
Maius opus moveo (*Aen.* 7.44-45).

The arguments which are advanced to sustain this opinion lead to a consideration of the significance of the *Aeneis* as a whole: "As far as Aeneas is concerned in it, it is a story of essential unhappiness. I say 'as far as Aeneas is concerned,' and is that not to say in effect, 'as far as the whole poem is concerned'?" (page 210) This pessimistic interpretation of the sufferings of Aeneas is then universalized: "The fundamental tale of man—and that man is I, you,

Virgil, Aeneas, and Everyman—is tragedy; we are born to sorrow as the sparks fly upward. . . . There have been in one form and another, shifting beliefs in an active deity or in puissant gods who can be bribed or cajoled or prayed into the semblance of changing the course of fate, but man should know better; all his experience tells him *desine fata deum flecti sperare precando*" (p. 212). But that such a lesson could have been intended by Vergil, or tolerated by Augustus, or comprehended by the *religiosissimi mortales*, or have appealed to the readers of the *Aeneis* through the centuries, seems to me to be incredible.

Vergil's insistence upon the reality of divine providence does not necessarily take away from his hero his freedom of choice. Before setting out on his journey Aeneas was surrounded by Trojans who were willing to follow him wherever he should wish to lead them:

. . . animis opibusque parati
In quascumque velim pelago deducere terras (*Aen.* 2.799-800).

His greatness lay not in his being a mere automaton at the service of the gods or fate but in the sacrifice of his own inclinations (*Italiam non sponte sequor: Aen.* 4.361) to reach a goal which was foreordained but nonetheless freely chosen.

Without the assistance of supernatural revelation it is undoubtedly difficult to reconcile one's self to the mystery of the compatibility of divine foreknowledge with human freedom, and the necessity of prayer. Yet these truths taken separately are sufficiently accessible to human reason. The greatness of the *Aeneis* lies in the fact that Vergil did not attempt to deny nor to rationalize the mystery, but in that more than any other pagan poet he embodied in his epic the reality of God's providence, without at the same time denying the individual's responsibility for his own acts. The *pietas* of Aeneas is rewarded, even though the reward is foreknown. It is because Vergil faced the mystery and did not shy from it that his poem has had a perennial appeal.

Intended by Mr. Alexander's second study is "to take note of all references to Seneca occurring in Tacitus and of everything that looks like deliberate omission, with a view of finding out what the 'gloomy dean' of Roman historians actually said (or instructively failed to say) about Seneca" (p. 350). Thus Alexander discusses the early influence which Seneca had over the young Emperor Nero, his conflict with Agrippina, and his ultimate falling out of favor with the "Prince Emancipated" (pp. 318-335). The story is, of course, largely one of violence and intrigue, and one in which Seneca played something of an ambiguous role. The Tacitean *non liquet* with regard to Seneca consists in Tacitus's "failure to arrive at a terminal judgment" about his character (p. 371). According to Alexander, the reason for failure lies in the fact that "Seneca obviously could not be reduced to a sharp catalogic character-definition 'static and immutable.' . . . Seneca's activities were the outcome of an exceedingly complex character which could not by any device whatever be viewed as a unity and hence could not be covered by a single sharp phrase, by any polarized points of view for good and for evil" (p. 372). Alexander believes Pliny the Elder's description of Seneca as *princeps tum eruditorum ac potentia* provided a centralized feature about which Tacitus could have narrated Seneca's tragic downfall, but it lacked the intrinsic malevolence on which Tacitus capitalized in his writings: "Tacitus . . . succeeds in the case of persons in whom he can plausibly assume an essential innate badness and elaborate the subsequent development of this badness to a finality that is fearful indeed" (p. 375).

Alexander's criticism of Tacitus is dominated by a conviction that for the Romans "style was regarded as of first importance in writing history," though "there are principles involved too" (page 270). This is a perilous assumption and possibly leads the author into the fault of characterizing Tacitus much in the same manner as he is accused of characterizing the individuals about whom he wrote. Nowhere does Alexander discuss the problem of Tacitus's sources, a problem which has exercised the ingenuity of scholars for decades. It is quite possible that the hesitancy of Tacitus with regard to Seneca's character is in large part due to the contradictory evidence at his disposal.

M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J.

Saint Stanislaus Seminary,
Florissant, Missouri

Tolle iactantiam, et omnes homines quid sunt nisi
homines?—August. *Civ. D.* 5.17.

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